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The Washington Merry-Go-Round

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Africa Uranium Areas Friendly

By Drew Pearson

PART OF WHAT they saw cannot be revealed for security reasons, but members of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy were greatly encouraged about our future uranium supply during a trip through the Belgian Congo and the Union of South Africa.

It is no secret that the United States has advanced funds for uranium mining and processing in these areas, to be repaid by future shipments. The congressional group, led by Sen. Bourke Hickenlooper (R-Iowa), found these facilities in excellent condition, operating at peak efficiency.

Equally important, Senator Hickenlooper and colleagues learned that the people in the uranium areas are our friends, especially in the Belgian Congo, where there were no signs of political unrest or Communist activity. Unlike race prejudice and race riots in the rest of Africa, Belgian Congo natives were happy, well fed, and not anti-white. The Belgians seemed to have done a better race relations job than the British.

Though race relations were not good in the Union of South Africa, they were relatively quiet compared with the terrorist movements of the Mau Mau gangs in British Kenya.

There, British Commander Sir George Erskine maintains a large force of troops to deal with the terrorists, and practically all civilians are armed. Men carry rifles and sidearms, and women are seen with .45-caliber revolvers on shopping trips.

Bodyguards

HICKENLOOPER'S COLLEAGUES—including Reps. Sterling Cole (R-N. Y.), Thomas Jenkins (R-Ohio), James Van Zandt (R-Pa.), Carl Hershaw (R-Calif.), Peter Hoffield (D-Calif.) and Mel Price (D-Ill.)—got a taste of the warlike

atmosphere during a 100-mile auto trip from Nairobi, capital of Kenya. They were escorted every minute by two British soldiers with tommyguns.

A bigger surprise, however, came at Cairo. Leaving their hotel rooms in the morning, each discovered an armed man outside the door. When the stranger shadowed Rep. Hoffield down to the lobby, the California Congressman pointed him out to a room clerk and inquired uneasily:

"Is this man planning to shoot me?"

"No, sir," grinned the clerk. "He's here to guard you. Premier Naguib has detailed a guard to all you gentlemen."

In Damascus, the Hickenlooper group found President Shaky of Syria none too cordial. He criticized both President Eisenhower and former President Truman as having been "too friendly" to Israel and not considerate enough of Arab peoples.

His callers hastened to remind Shaky that we had appropriated as much money for Arab refugees as for Jewish displaced persons.

Impartial Diplomat

FOR SEVEN MONTHS, Joao Carlos Muniz, new Brazilian Ambassador to the United States, has occupied about the hottest spot in the diplomatic world. He has been chairman of the United Nations Political Committee, sitting on the dynamite-laden question of Korea.

When it became known that Ambassador Muniz was going to leave this post and transfer to Washington, delegate after delegate rose to pay tribute to his impartial rulings.

As Western diplomats finished their tributes, there was an abrupt move from the Soviet section and white-manned Andrei Vishinsky shouted for recognition. Ambassador Muniz figured he was in for a devastating harangue.

"I would like to add my own appreciation," Vishinsky said, "of the way our able chairman from Brazil has conducted himself."

Muniz nearly fell from his seat.

The new Ambassador knows the United States intimately. He came to New York as vice consul in 1918, took a law degree at New York University, has traveled all over the United States. He is considered Brazil's most experienced diplomat.

Confusing Geography

ALLEN DULLES, alert boss of the Central Intelligence Agency and brother of the Secretary of State, is doing a bang-up job on intelligence near and around the Iron Curtain, but he still has something to learn about geography.

Attending the White House luncheon for Adlai Stevenson, Allen Dulles was talking to Josh Lee of the Civil Aeronautics Board about this subject.

"There are a lot of funny things about geography," said Josh Lee. "Just recently, I discovered that Russia's big seaport at Vladivostok, even though it's frequently ice-bound, is actually about 150 miles south of the warm-water port of Venice, Italy."

"I don't believe it," replied the intelligence boss.

"Well, let's make an imaginary bet on it," said Lee.

"We'll let Jim Hagerty here told the 'stakes' in his mind."

Presidential Secretary Hagerty agreed while Lee and Dulles sealed the "bet" with a handshake.

After lunch, Lee measured his world globe. Unquestionably, Vladivostok is south of Venice.

Inside Washington

GOVERNMENT AGENTS have finally discovered why they've had so much trouble breaking up the big numbers racket at the Pentagon. The numbers gang has been sending its messages, believe it or not, through the pneumatic communication tubes used for carrying military secrets.

CIA Director Allen Dulles has definitely decided that Senator McCarthy's report of Marshal Beria's escape from Russia is 100-percent phony. Two United States agents who had previously seen Beria came back from Europe with the report that McCarthy's supposed Beria was a hoax. Other advisers warn that Lee used to be anti-American before he was forced to flee to America.

The rumor is going around Washington that Treasury Secretary George Humphrey believes a little depression would be a good thing. Actually this idea was privately advocated, not by Humphrey, but by Budget Director Joseph Dodge.

Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge told India's United Nations delegate in a secret meeting last week that the United States has been shocked by some of the pro-Communist decisions made by the Indian Truce Commission in Korea. If this continues, Lodge warned, President Eisenhower may protest publicly.

Texas Eisenhower backers won't like it, but one plan being considered to increase tax revenues is reduction of the 27½-percent oil depletion tax. Though this will send cold shivers down the backs of certain Texas oil magnates, some Treasury experts believe the 27½ figure is too generous and should be scaled down to 10 or 15 percent.

Uneasy Korean Truce

THE HOSTILITY of Dr. Syngman Rhee to the coming Korean peace talks is so vehement that the State Department is studying a recommendation to support a Korean refugee, Lee Bum Suk, to succeed Syngman Rhee as President of Korea in case the stubborn old South Korean patriot tries again to sabotage the truce.

Lee has been staying in this country since Rhee forced him out of the South Korean government. However, the State Department is reluctant to interfere in Korean politics, lest the United States be accused of trying to make an American satellite out of that area. Other advisers warn that Lee used to be anti-American before he was forced to flee to America.